



Independent Electrical Contractors of New England, Inc.

To: Environment Committee

February 27, 2023

Re: SB 979: An Act Promoting Energy Affordability, Energy Efficiency and Green Cities.

Co-Chairs Lopes, and Gresko, Vice Chairs Hochadel and Palm, Ranking Members Harding, and Callahan, and all other members of the Environment Committee.

The Independent Electrical Contractors of New England (**IECNE**) located in Rocky Hill, would like to offer its constructive comments to that portion of **SB 979, An Act Promoting Energy Affordability, Energy Efficiency and Green Cities**. **IECNE** is a trade association comprised of merit shop electrical contractors and industry related associate members. As a pro-education association, we provide both State and Federally approved training programs for apprentices and for continued education programs for many electrical licensees, not to mention many other professional development programs for our ever-evolving electrical industry.

IECNE, would like to offer our comment to Section 5 of this proposed legislation, specifically lines 272 -291 as it relates to adding the requirement of “training in the mechanics and application of thermal space and water heating systems” to the existing continued education program for electricians. Additionally, there is a requirement that the Commissioner of the Department of Consumer Protection provide on the department website a list of manufacturer-sponsored certification programs for thermal space and water heating systems, that would satisfy the accredited continuing education programs for electricians.

As part of the training to become an electrician (8000 hrs. of on-the-job training and 720 hours of classroom related instruction) and to renew your license annually, electricians are required to take a minimum of 4 hours and up to 7 hours annually of continued education as determined by the Electrical Work Examining Board. During the above training, electricians are trained in the wiring of mechanical equipment (heat pumps, motors etc. as an example). Additionally, they receive training in low voltage control systems that interconnect and operate individual pieces of mechanical equipment that need to function in conjunction with each other, and on systems that are much more complex than thermal space and water heating systems.

Regarding manufacturer-sponsored certification programs, **IECNE** is not a supporter of providing such a proprietary list on the DPC website, as it will be interpreted as an endorsement of a specific product. This is something that we have worked very hard since the inception of continued education to avoid.

To mandate that all electrical contractors and electricians must take these specific classes will take away from the overall learning of the changes (about 1800 from 2017 – 2020) in the National Electrical Code alone, not to mention our state amendments to that code and the requirements to keep up to date with changing laws and OSHA for everyone's safety.

Based on the above, **IECNE** would like to see all references to thermal space and water heating systems removed from lines 272-285 of **SB 979** as well as lines 285 - 291 (starting at “The”) and allow the industry subject matter experts to provide any and all required additional training to keep up with any new technological changes in the industry that may be deemed necessary.

Respectfully submitted:

Larry Vallieres, Government Relations Chairman
Independent Electrical Contractors of New England

